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FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
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INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5545
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3265
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3130
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 3788
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1088
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 3801
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 08 ASHGABAT 001043

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN; IO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [EAGR](#) [PARM](#) [SENV](#) [UNGA](#) [UNHCR](#) [FAO](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: TURKMENISTAN'S AGENDA FOR THE 64TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

11. (U) Sensitive but Unclassified. Not for Internet distribution

12. (SBU) SUMMARY: On July 31, Post received a circular diplomatic note from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan containing an explanation of the Turkmenistan Government's positions on issues to be considered during the 64th United Nations General Assembly. The Ministry's circular called for the establishment of an expert group to prepare recommendations on development of an international legal document on energy transit. It called for an international conference on disarmament in Central Asia and the Caspian Basin. It informed about the country's intention to join the International Monitoring System (IMS) of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CNTBT) and establish jointly with CNTBT a station in Turkmenistan to monitor earth crust vibration at seismically active zones. Factoring in the country's successful cooperation with the UNHCR, it also informed about Turkmenistan's intention to be nominated to the UNHCR Executive Committee. In the document, Turkmenistan proposed the opening of regional centers for the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Ashgabat. Finally, the document announced Turkmenistan's intention to expand its participation in the implementation of projects and programs within the framework of the UN and its agencies, first of all, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). This year, for the second time, Turkmenistan was elected as a Vice Chairman of the UN General Assembly. END SUMMARY.

13. (SBU) The following is the text of the document (informal Embassy translation):

Maintaining and strengthening global peace and security.

The principal goal of the foreign policy of Turkmenistan was and continues to be to offer every possible assistance to the world community in its efforts to maintain and strengthen the

global security system, prevent and neutralize the threat of regional conflicts, provide conditions for stable and sustainable development of states and people and for broad and constructive international cooperation. An important component in achieving this goal is the neutral status of Turkmenistan, recognized by the world community. We believe that the permanent neutrality of Turkmenistan and related specifics of its location in the region open for the Community of Nations represented by the UN, OSCE and other authoritative universal organizations very good practical opportunities to influence positively the progress and nature of processes in Central Asia and in the area of the Caspian Basin by setting up permanently functioning mechanisms of international communication to discuss various aspects of regional problems and to work out mutually acceptable and consensus solutions.

Based on its past positive experience of non-military, political and diplomatic peacekeeping under the aegis of the UN, Turkmenistan declares its readiness to provide the world community with the necessary political and logistical conditions for this work. In this context, we consider exceptionally important and promising the United Nations decision to open the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia with headquarters in Ashgabat adopted in 2007 with the support of all the states of the region. Currently, the Regional Center works actively on monitoring and analyzing regional problems, takes an active part in various events on significant issues of development of Central Asia, including at head-of-state levels, and assists in working out approaches to their solutions.

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Activity of the Regional Center won it authority and respect by the leadership of Central Asian states, and was highly commended by the UN Secretary General. We are convinced that the activity of this international agency corresponds to the interests of the region and all world community. In this context, Turkmenistan welcomes engagement of states, international organizations, financial and economic institutions, and experts with the efforts of the UN and its Regional Center to work out constructive models of development of the regional processes.

In forming our approaches to the problem of providing global security, our basis is the integrity and inseparability of this concept - both in its geopolitical meaning, and from the point of view of the interrelation of its specific aspects. We are convinced that security of a country cannot be provided without security in the region, on the continent, and in the world. Likewise, political or military security will not be long-lasting and complete without providing economic, energy, and food security, without the prevention and neutralizing of risks and threats of an ecological, techno-genetic nature, without effective combat against international terrorism, organized crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and other global challenges.

From this point of view, the current system of international energy deliveries, we have to admit, is one of the most vulnerable links in the global economy. Such vulnerability is caused by several reasons - political instability, lack of commonly-accepted international legal regulation mechanisms, infrastructure shortcomings, and the lopsided geography of pipeline routes. All this puts its mark on the general atmosphere of energy deliveries on the world market. To change this situation, to overcome the inertia of stereotypes, to enter a new level of thinking, corresponding to contemporary demands is an objective necessity. Today, we do not speak about taking preventive measures, not about reaching local agreements on certain aspects of fuel transportation, but rather about the creation of a fundamentally new, universal model of relations in the world energy arena - of a model based on a multi-sided balance of interests, a concurrence of visions and notions about the

global architecture of energy security, recognition of long-term benefits and advantage of cooperation.

As a first step towards in this direction, it is logical to start broad international contact on the issue of energy deliveries. It is necessary to find lines of common interest, determine initial positions, work out common language for dialogue. In other words, to create a basis for cooperation among interested parties on this subject. Based on this, Turkmenistan introduced a proposal at the UN to begin working on universal mechanisms that would ensure the reliable and secure functioning of the infrastructure of international energy delivery, access to it and its effective use. The first step was the UN draft resolution "Reliable and Stable Energy Transit and its Role in Ensuring Sustainable Development and International Cooperation" proposed by Turkmenistan. The resolution draft attracted the attention of the UN member states, many of which actively participated in broad consultations prior to its official review by General Assembly. As is known, the resolution was supported by all the UN member states without exception, 57 of which were co-authors, including 5 permanent members of the Security Council, and was adopted by General Assembly in consensus on December 19, 2008.

Following the letter and spirit of the resolution, Turkmenistan proposed to host the international high-level conference "Reliable and Stable Energy Transit and

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its role in Ensuring Sustainable Development and International Cooperation" that was held in Ashgabat on April 23-24, 2009. Representatives of governments, international organizations, international financial institutions, scientists, diplomats, as well as top national and transnational companies engaged in energy resource development and transportation participated at this conference.

One of the conference results was a proposal to request the UN to review the issue of establishing an expert group to prepare recommendations on development of a future international legal document on energy transit, taking into account suggestions of interested states and international organizations. Turkmenistan is entirely ready to assist in the establishment of such a structure within the UN framework and calls on all interested states to formulate proposals on its work. We believe that the establishment of the group could be the first step in the process of the preparation of a complex UN document, aimed at ensuring the effective functioning of international energy delivery system, including issues of the protection of the energy transport system.

14. (SBU) Disarmament processes.

In the opinion of Turkmenistan, assistance to processes of disarmament, reduction of weapon arsenals, first of all, weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation, remains one of the key topics on global agenda. We believe that there is no place in the modern system of international relations for the legacy of the cold war and recidivism to confrontation between blocks, when the quantity and quality of weapons were nearly the primary criteria of influence and authority of states. We are convinced - the fewer weapons there are in the world, the more stable and peaceful will be its development, and much more trust and understanding there will be between countries and people.

With its neutral status, based on peacefulness and good neighborliness, Turkmenistan on the national level adopted several important pieces of legislation pertaining to weapons of mass destruction. Thus, the

legislation of Turkmenistan proclaims the refusal by our country of the possession, production, storage, and transport of nuclear, chemical, bacteriologic and other types of weapons of mass destruction, as well as from new ways and technologies for their production. In 2005, a statement to support initiatives of international organizations to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction was adopted by a resolution of the People's Council of Turkmenistan. In 2006, Turkmenistan together with other states of the region, signed at the city of Semipalatinsk an agreement on the creation of a nuclear weapons free zone in Central Asia. This, to a large extent, is a unique document because, for the first time since World War II, it proclaims the emergence of a vast region on the map of the Northern Hemisphere free of nuclear weapons. It is illustrative that our joint initiative is in harmony with the aspiration of the majority of countries of the world, it was highly praised by the international community and approved by the UN General Assembly. In this regard, we believe that it is of high priority to conduct under the aegis of the UN a representative international conference dedicated to the disarmament problems in the region of Central Asia and Caspian basin in the first half of the year. Our country is ready to act as an organizer of this event. Turkmenistan is a participant of important international disarmament conventions and agreements, in particular, such as:

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- Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty;
- Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty;
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction;
- Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction;
- Convention on the Prohibition on the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on their Destruction;
- Several other important international documents on this issue.

Our country would welcome constructive proposals of the international community and individual states aimed at assistance to global disarmament processes, and review with interest the issues of its participation in their realization.

Within the context of fulfilling its commitments in this sphere, Turkmenistan will continue to work to include our country in the International Monitoring System (IMS) of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization (CNTBT). In this regard, work will be completed, jointly with the CNTBT, on the creation of a station in Turkmenistan to monitor earth crust vibration at seismically active zones.

15. (SBU) Role of the United Nations.

Cooperation with the United Nations will remain a definite vector of our foreign policy. Despite the changes taking place in the world, Turkmenistan is convinced that the great humanistic ideals of the United Nations and the principles of the UN Charter must remain the moral and legal pillars of the international order. Only on that basis is it possible to review issues of UN reform.

The reform of the organization must be thoughtful, targeted and corresponding to the objective imperatives of our times. In this regard, Turkmenistan supports efforts by UN member states and the Secretary General

aimed at making the organization's activity more dynamic, effective, open and democratic.

In this context, Turkmenistan shares the opinion on the need for further improvement of the structure of the Security Council, building closer and more effective interaction between the Security Council and the General Assembly. We are in favor of UN reform to further strengthen and increase the effectiveness of its work, expanding the role and function of the Community of Nations as a guarantee of international peace and stability.

16. (SBU) Countering modern challenges and threats.

One of the most serious demands of a global scale today is the effective combat against international terrorism, drug trafficking, and trans-border organized crime. As a result of a number of historical, geographic and other reasons, this problem is especially relevant for our region. We are convinced that only joint efforts of states, through close interaction with international structures, can successfully oppose these threats. In this context, Turkmenistan gives a special role to the activity of the United Nations, and first of all, the Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia. We believe that the participation of the Center is necessary and timely in the development and coordination

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of effective models of international cooperation with the goal to neutralize these threats, involving mechanisms of preventive diplomacy and creating conditions for post-conflict recovery of economic and social infrastructure.

In this regard, it necessary to emphasize the particular importance that Turkmenistan attaches to the rebuilding of Afghanistan and the establishment of stable peace on Afghan land. Our country assists Afghanistan in the restoration of its economy and in the construction of social and humanitarian facilities. We wish to see Afghanistan as a peaceful and prosperous country, good neighbor and partner of all the states in the region. At the same time, we believe that the United Nations is called to play an important, if not decisive, role in Afghan reconciliation. We are convinced that the UN with its huge peacekeeping experience and highest moral authority is capable of proposing new forms and models in the context of political and diplomatic efforts to solve the problems of Afghanistan and establish peace and conciliation in the country. Today, this work can be activated and become more effective taking into account the opportunities of the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia. We advocate expanded and targeted involvement of the Regional Center in the efforts of the international community in the reconciliation of the situation in Afghanistan.

17. (SBU) Human rights protection and encouragement.

Strenuous protection and encouragement of human rights, creating conditions for maximum realization of individual creative potential and providing an opportunity for a citizen to participate actively in the life of the community and the state are a priority policy of Turkmenistan, the primary meaning of which is contained in the brief phrase - "The State for the person."

The positive dynamic here is obvious and is accepted today by the international community and UN specialized agencies. Recently, important steps were made to improve the legislative base - a new edition of the Constitution of Turkmenistan, where new historical conditions and tasks for the future are taken into account, as well as a series of laws of Turkmenistan aimed at further improvement of country's political

system and strengthening of democratic institutions in society, were adopted.

Elections of Mejlis (Parliament) deputies of the fourth convocation were held on December 14, 2008. The world community paid close attention to this event. Nearly 60 international observers and experts, including representatives of European countries and authoritative international organizations - the UN, OSCE, CIS, were invited to Turkmenistan.

We place special emphasis on international cooperation in terms of human rights protection and encouragement. In this context, recent significant stepping up of the interaction between the UN and Turkmenistan, as well regular visits by the representatives of specialized institutions and UN humanitarian agencies is illustrative. Promising areas for setting up close interaction with UN agencies are maternity and child welfare, protection of the rights of people with disabilities, of the rights of refugees, etc. This work is of special interest in light of the recent participation of Turkmenistan in several relevant international protocols and conventions.

One of the clear examples of Turkmenistan's effective activity in the human rights sphere is that, by the

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Presidential Decree of 2005, over fourteen thousand people received citizenship, and over three thousand received residence permits. The majority of these people were refugees. In cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, these people were provided with all necessary conditions for a complete livelihood in Turkmenistan. Cooperation of our country with the UNHCR has proved its effectiveness, and taking into account this fact, Turkmenistan announces its intention to be nominated to the UNHCR Executive Committee. We think that Turkmenistan's participation in this important body could positively impact its work.

While reviewing human rights issues, we believe that the activity of the UN Human Rights Council, in particular, cooperation in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review mechanism is significant. In March this year, a Universal Periodic Review that earlier was forwarded by the Turkmen side was reviewed during the tenth session of the UN Human Rights Council with participation of the authorized representatives of Turkmenistan. We intend to continue cooperation with this important international structure, and will review its recommendations with attention and respect.

Regarding the delivery to the UN General Assembly of so called "country" resolutions on human rights, Turkmenistan believes that such practice does not contribute to the constructive international dialogue on human rights. And of course, we are strongly against politicization of human rights and using it as a pretext to interfere to the internal affairs of sovereign states. International mechanisms in this sphere shall add to, but not replace, the work on the national level.

18. (SBU) Ecology and environmental protection issues.

Turkmenistan gives significant attention to the ecology and environmental protection issues and advocates closer international collaboration in this sphere. In this context, our country draws attention to the need to engage actively with the specialized UN agencies on such a pressing issue as saving the Aral Sea which, today, falls outside the regional scope. At the national level Turkmenistan conducts serious work to improve the ecological and social-economic situation in the basin of the Aral Sea. Thus, in the last two years, the government

made investments in the amount of 170 million USD to relevant projects in the Dashoguz region adjacent to the Aral. However, national efforts cannot solve the entire complex of accumulated problems. There is a need for a consolidated approach by all states in the region, international organizations and donors. Based on this, our country made a concrete proposal at the recent summit of the founders of the International Fund to Save the Aral Sea - to create a special expert group which in cooperation with the UN and its agencies could prepare a complex international legal document to save the Aral. Turkmenistan believes that the most important component of the environmental activity in the Central Asian region is cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). We are convinced that closer collaboration of the regional states with this agency can give positive results, facilitate modeling coherent approaches to solve serious ecological problems of Central Asia, including rational water resources management. In this regard, Turkmenistan proposes to review the issue of opening the Regional Center for UNEP in Central Asia with headquarters in Ashgabat.

19. (SBU) Global financial and economic crisis.

Turkmenistan supports the provisions of the Final

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Document of the UN Conference on Global Financial and Economic Crisis and its Consequences for Development, and believes in the high priority of the specific proposals to promptly reform world financial institutions - the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

At the national level, our country will continue a balanced economic policy aimed at preserving the national economic growth rate focused on the priority development of the social sphere, further support of the vulnerable population, and providing a package of economic and social benefits to all citizens of the country. In this context, Turkmenistan intends to expand its participation in project and program implementation in the framework of the UN and its agencies, first of all, UNDP, UNECE and ESCAP.

10. (SBU) Food program.

The food crisis and its impact on the general situation in the world cannot but cause concern in Turkmenistan. Our country views providing global food security as an important factor of sustainable and stable economic and social development of humanity. Turkmenistan welcomes and supports the efforts by the UN and its primary specialized agency, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), to stabilize the world food market, and believes that it is necessary to introduce significant corrective action to national and international agriculture programs of both developed and developing countries based on the reality that has developed.

The Agricultural Forum of the CIS states scheduled for October 2009 in the capital of Turkmenistan, Ashgabat, will be an important contribution to coordination of international efforts to solve the food problem.

We believe that Central Asia, being also an important agrarian region, can play a significant role in providing food security. Based on this, Turkmenistan advocates closer interaction of the regional states with the FAO. A serious step towards this could be the opening of an FAO Regional Center in one of the Central Asian states. We are willing to propose Ashgabat for its office location.

11. (SBU) Science, culture and education.

Cultural development and the improvement of its scientific and educational system is a priority focus of Turkmenistan's state policy. Educational reforms underway in our country envisage its participation in broad international interaction, scientific, educational and cultural exchanges.

Turkmenistan gives an important place in this work in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

We highly appreciate UNESCO assistance in preserving and publicizing the richest cultural and historical heritage of Turkmenistan and unique natural sites of our country. Presently, three cultural and historical sites located in Turkmenistan are included on the UNESCO World Heritage List: Ancient Merv, Kone-Urgench and Nissa. We proposed to include in that list one more cultural historical site "Missirian-Dekhistan Site," as well as six unique natural sites (Badhyz State Reserve, Syunt Khasardag State Reserve, Dinosaur footsteps and Koytendag caves, Repetek State Botanic Reserve, Amudarya State Reserve and Khazar State Reserve). We will work actively and hard in that direction.

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Turkmenistan intends to further develop and expand interaction with UNESCO, including through the National Commission. In this context, Turkmenistan is reviewing with interest the opportunity to join several UN Conventions concerning UNESCO.

We believe there is a need to refer to the opportunities of UNESCO Cluster Office in Tehran. We advocate its active engagement in project implementation in the region, strengthening its role as coordinator and moderator of interaction between the regional states and UNESCO headquarters.

End text of document.

112. (SBU) COMMENT: Given the Turkmen Government's high regard for the United Nations and its agencies, it is no surprise that they support involvement of the UN in a number of regional issues such as the nuclear free zone and the Aral Sea. Some of the proposals were predictable, such as follow-up to the Turkmen's energy transit security initiative last year. Finally, offers by Ashgabat to host regional centers for the FAO and UNEP suggest the Turkmen are pleased with the profile and image of the Ashgabat-based UN Regional Diplomacy Center and would like to further burnish their credentials in the international community.
END COMMENT.

MILES